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# HAWAIIAN MEMORIES

Blanche Howard Wenner



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## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

### DIAMOND HEAD

Great sentinel of tropic loveliness,  
Titanic rock, clear cut in majesty.  
Across whose rigid back the winds flow free,—  
Art thou the monument of that duress  
Whence sprang the charm that lingering pilgrims  
    bless  
The verdant islands guarded so by thee?  
Or priest art thou for all that burdened sea,  
Whose long blue waves at thy still feet confess?  
Unchanging giant, well may scan thy mien  
These people, ever luring pleasure sweet;  
For thou, all gray amidst the gardens green,  
And golden quiver of the sunlight's beat.  
Standest, as did that ancient Ark of Right,  
Thro' storms unflinching in thy furrowed might.

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

### ON THE OLD MOANA PIER

To the heart of many a maiden  
Who has sojourned in Hawaii,  
There's a spot forever laden  
With a smile and with a sigh.  
So ho, for the times so far and dear,  
When they wandered in the morning  
On the old Moana Pier.

Then the violet sea was tumbled  
O'er the reefs, and softly grumbled  
As the silver sands were crumbled  
In the sun-light hot and clear;  
Then the distant palms were gleaming,  
And the deeps with fish were teeming,  
While her eyes in his were dreaming  
On the Old Moana Pier.

And the afternoon would find them  
Pacing o'er the foot-worn walk,  
While the Trade Winds blew behind them  
Little jestings from their talk.  
So ho, for the days so far and dear,  
When they lingered in the sun-light  
On the Old Moana Pier.

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

Then the distant ships arriving,  
And the breeze blown-palm trees striving  
And the naked natives diving  
From the brown raft floating near—  
Seemed but pictures strange and olden,  
Etched upon the sunshine golden,  
All by them to be beholden  
From the Old Moana Pier.

Strange old pier, so long and silent,  
Stretching out to meet the sea,  
You have harbored scenes quite violent—  
(Tropic loves that quickly flee!)  
So ho, for those star-sweet nights so dear,  
When they walked another dance out on the  
Old Moana Pier.

Then the lights were softly glowing,  
And the distant music flowing,  
Through the shadows, deeper growing,  
Brought a wonder and a fear  
Of "Aloha" softly ringing.  
And the far surf's ceaseless singing,  
While the Tropic night came swinging  
O'er the Old Moana Pier.

## HAWAIIAN MEMORIES

### TO THE PALI

(*On Horseback*)

I mount—we are off—my lady and I,  
And the hard road beneath us, in flashes doth  
fly.  
I flee from the town, and the soft dreaming heat;  
Now strike for the hills, with your swift flying  
feet!

Here steady, now, steady!  
The climb's yet to make,  
And I am not ready  
Your smooth neck to break!

On we swing, and the ring of her hoofs on the  
road,  
The one sound all around—how it beats off my  
load!

Cool breath from the banyon;  
We're nearing the canyon;  
Green rice fields below  
Like little squares show. Whoa!

Now wheel about, for one last look I'll turn.  
Behold the sea in silver sunlight burn;  
Far to the left, straight from the reaches free,  
Rolls in the shining surf of Waikiki;  
And in the vale, with Royal Palms above,  
Lies Honolulu, city of my love.

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

Now on, my fine lady, your spirit ne'er slacks!

Feel the breeze in our faces, the sun on our backs.

We have entered the canyon—ah, here's a good place—

With that hard road ahead—are you game for a race?

What a wild rush of air!

How the rigid rocks flash.

Oh, the wind in my hair!

Slow, my lady, you're rash.

I would see, as we flee, how the little green trees  
Wave and bend to the trend of the Pali's mad  
breeze.

What a keenness it brings!

See, yonder are springs;

There's a shelter I know

From the wind's battle-blow. Whoa!

How clear the water is, how pure and cold!

An' high above the mountain, brown and bold,

On whose far heights the speeding wind doth rip,

Seizing all things within his greedy grip,

And even the waterfalls he tears away,

Throwing them upward in a wail of spray.

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

Come, forward, my lady, the Pali's ahead!  
We must stand on the brink, e'er the sunlight  
is dead.  
There's a little cloud speeding adown the wind's  
train,  
And if I mistake not, 'twill drench us with  
rain.

But away! we are glad  
Through the cloud's misty curtain  
To leap—tisn't bad!  
But it's wet—that is certain.

Oh, I thrill to the will of the surf-scented  
shower—  
Ah, at last it is past; now the sunlit cliffs  
tower!

There's the gap and the ocean—  
Quick, charge this mad motion!  
'Tis the Pali's own blow.  
Here's the brink and below—Whoa!

How green and sweet the sugar cane's wide  
fields!  
How fresh the pineapples yon meadow yields!  
While far away the brilliant, bounding sea,  
O'er whose blue surface sweep the Trade  
Winds free.  
And this steep cliff, across whose edge they tell  
A conquered people struggled, fought and  
fell!

*HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

THE DIVE

He stands erect, slender and shining brown,  
The native boy;  
Hands high, but eyes upon the sea bent down,  
Gleaming with joy.  
He springs—a second's bronzy flash is seen—  
Then swift he shoots into the sea's clear green.

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

### THE WIDOW OF WAIKIKI

(*A ballad*)

She was the widow of Waikiki, little, blase and pert;  
And her deepest plan was to snare a man  
    For a moon-lit evening's flirt.  
But wasn't it sad for a gay Marine  
    To awake with an aching head—  
To have lost a girl, with teeth like pearl  
    Thro' the lure of a parasol red?

'Tis a pleasant thing of an afternoon  
    To sit on a long lanai,  
And watch the surf boards skim the deep.  
    And the pretty girls go by.  
Now he was a handsome officer.  
    And a little bit swift at that,  
And she was the widow of Waikiki,  
    With cherries upon her hat.  
She loitered by, with a melting eye—  
    (Oh, the Tropic day was warm!)  
And a little talk, and a little walk  
    Should never end in harm.  
But out on the pier is a joysome place,  
    In the sunset's tender light;  
And an automobile, and the Country Club,  
    Are nice on a Tropic night.  
So he sent for a brother officer,

## HAWAIIAN MEMORIES

Who for fun was always game;  
And they got a girl from the Orpheum  
To keep it from being tame.  
So off they went, when the day was spent,  
And as over the road they sped,  
The thought of the girl, with teeth like pearl  
Had not yet entered his head.  
Yet he was engaged to the preacher's daughter,  
Pretty, petite, and good,  
Who walked in the straight and narrow path,  
As a preacher's daughter should.  
And even that night, she was waiting for him,  
To sit on the small lanai,  
Or to wander in father's garden,  
Under a starry sky.  
But the Country Club (oh, there's the rub)  
Is so charming a place, I ween,  
That you never know where the minutes go—  
Alas! for the gay Marine!  
For when he thought, in the midst of the feast,  
Of the maiden there alone,  
In panic he rushed, with shaky legs,  
To call her up by 'phone.  
And so mixed he was, that his addled brain  
Thus wrenched the heart of the beauty;  
“I am hopelessly detained, dear love,  
At the Country Club, *on duty!*”

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

Now who would think that the glasses' clink  
The telephone wires won't cover?  
And the words she said will buzz in his head—  
Until he finds another.

Oh, the Country Club, on its wonderful links  
Is a dangerous place to be;  
And woman and wine and song, 'tis said,  
Are an officer's devils three;  
But what is lost is lost, you know,  
And there's no use recalling;  
And a host must do his best, you know,  
When the Tropic moon-light's falling.  
So a gay Marine, and a swift machine,  
And the ocean by them whizzes!  
And the widow is "on" for a Marathon,  
In the wake of a few gin fizzes.

She was the widow of Waikiki, little, blasé, and pert.  
And her deepest plan was to snare a man  
For a moon-lit evening's flirt.  
But wasn't it sad for a gay Marine  
To awake with an aching head—  
To have lost a girl, with teeth like pearl,  
Thro' the lure of a parasol red?

### THE TRAIL TO TANTALUS

Come, comrade, we will strike the winding trail,  
Where spicy odors on the sunlight sail;  
The trail that leads 'neath Eucalyptus trees,  
Whose silver shadow woo the brilliant breeze.  
And there, with gray-gold lights to mantle us,  
We'll sing our pæan to old Tantalus.

So come, my friend.

'Tis quite a grade that we will have to make,  
Ere that cold stream our clim-dried lips will  
slake.

But, oh, the zest in working towards the heights!  
And, looking down upon the valley's lights  
We'll see the rain-bow o'er Manoa placed,  
And slender mists of rain by sunlight chased.

Then, comrade, come.

Nay, linger not; you know old Tantalus  
Doth ever smile his welcome down on us.  
Since first together we achieved his crest,  
And sat upon his bare, cool heights to rest—  
Commanding from his summit all of life,  
Volcanic valleys, and the sea's far strife.

Dear comrade, come.

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

### **HAWAIIAN GARDEN**

Breath of a full-blown blossom as it dies;  
Scarlet Hibiscus and white butterflies;  
The ragged whisper of banana trees;  
And far away the hiving hum of bees.  
Cocoanuts falling where the sunlight gleams;  
Soft folding of blue water flowers in dreams,  
O'er Waikiki a gull upon the wing;  
Silence—and in the garden Love is King.

## HAWAIIAN MEMORIES

### THE LUAU

(*From a tourist's point of view.*)

Those natives in the garden—how they dig!  
What! They are taking up the roasted pig?  
(*Or dog!*) All swathed in shining leaves of Ti!  
Well, this looks like the very thing to me!

I say, dark maid, I haven't any fork  
With which to test this charming piece of pork.  
You don't use any! Really, pretty lass?  
Well, then, that calabash of fruit please pass.  
How charmingly "the Princess" doth preside.  
(I wouldn't eat like this to save my hide!)  
Some way upon the taste things seem to cloy.  
*What!* Dip my fingers in this bowl of poi!  
My appetite is gone—I wonder why!  
If this lasts long, upon my word I'll die.  
And now "the Princess" shares her perfume  
rare!  
My handkerchief is ruined—Help, Lord—Air!

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

### THE MAKERS OF THE LEI

Through sun-bright hours in the narrow street,  
Plucking the red carnations sweet,  
Hard by the cool, gray curb they sit,  
And thread the flower leaves, bit by bit—  
The makers of the Lei.

Dark old men, who dream of the past,  
Glib, fat women, whose tongues run fast;  
Working, gossiping, waving their flowers  
At the passers-by through the fragrant hours—  
The makers of the Lei.

Leis of yellow and red and blue,  
Their dusky fingers are flitting through;  
Green-leaved leis that shine in the light,  
And they smile o'er the ginger's scented white.  
The makers of the Lei.

Scarlet leis they hang on their arms  
For the Hula dancers' dusky charms  
Pink for the gay young lover's hat,  
And they give an extra twist to that—  
The makers of the Lei.

Leis to welcome the stranger guest,  
And to bid god-speed the friends loved best;  
Till it seems they cause in those leis to lie,  
The charméd sweetness of old Hawaii—  
The makers of the Lei.

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

### **ODE TO HAWAIIAN NIGHT**

O, trancéd Night! Silver Hawaiian Night,

Filled with the mysteries of all things sweet—  
Here with the darkness touched, there with the  
white,

Still veil of moon-beams wrapped about thy  
feet.

O, voice of Passion answering the soul,

And velvet hands that touch the spirit's  
wings,

And hold on high the purple starry scroll

Whereon God's harmony forever sings!

Night, to the mystic throbbing of thy breast

Gather my senses, calling out for rest.

Thou comest now, even as thou didst of yore,

When the dark natives lived upon the isles,  
Built their strange huts, and danced upon the  
shore,

Tuning their music to thy saddest smiles.

And now, as then, thou sweep'st upon the light.

Chasing it far across the round, dim sea,  
And with the yearning sweetness of the night,

Gather'st the verdant islands close to thee.

So, for long hours they lie in thy embrace,

While high above the stars slip on through  
space.

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

Of thee all wondrous, sweetest things are born,—

The night song of the surf upon the reef,  
And Love first whisper—stranger to the morn—

And Sleep that seals the heavy eyes of Grief.  
And that pure flower, the Cereus, doth seem,

Like to a baby's soul, new-born, to lie  
Within thy dusk, and like a maiden's dream,

With the first distant breath of light to die.  
Yea, they are highly sweet, these things of thine.

Oh, though the spirit's kinship make them mine !

Oh, Mother Night, moon-sweet Hawaiian  
Night,

Beneath thy breath the Tropic loves unfold,  
Even as the Cereus in its silver white

And fairy fragrance; and before the old  
Worn light of days can mar it where it lies,

So golden-hearted on the wall, it pales  
And slips to death,—so quickly thy love dies,

And all its strength in one deep night exhales!  
And yet more rare and precious seem those  
things.

Whose birth and death are compassed by thy  
wings.

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

### FROM A SURF BOARD

Closely I cling  
To the wet, brown thing—  
And wait.

There's a green wave swinging  
To soft foam singing—  
Now straight!

Point for the shore—HOLD TIGHT!  
I travel fast on its emerald height,  
And rise to my feet in the thing's wild flight.

Hands out—head back—clear the way!  
I am drunk with the speed of the salt-tanged  
spray!  
I am borne like a god on the water's roar!  
Slip,—Plunge! *Ouf, I must swim to shore.*

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

### HAWAIIAN MORNING

Out of the silent wells of night  
Springs a little child of light.  
Over the darkened arch of sea,  
Shod with sun-light wanders she.  
And the Gardens of Hawaii  
Lure her, as she passes by.

There her freshest smile she brings;  
There her rarest song she sings;  
Pouring there her sweetest balms  
To filter through the long-leaved palms.  
Passes sadly on her way—  
Looking backwards all the day.

## HAWAIIAN MEMORIES

### MOLOKAI

(“*The Leper Island*”)

Far distant o'er the ocean's shining miles,  
In that sweet zone where all the shafts of sun  
Leap fresh from the Equator one by one,  
She lies alone—amongst her sister isles,  
And every hour marks Death upon her dials.  
  
While over them the moon-gay pleasures run  
Her web is of the darkest meshes spun,  
And on her hills a spirit army files.  
O, Molokai, upon whose verdant breast  
The still, white ghost of Leprosy is nursed,  
What sorrow hangs above thy sunlit crest!  
What voice of pain by thy sad surf rehearsed!  
And yet, sweet stranger in the Tropic Sea,  
A tender, Mother-work is done by thee.

FLYING FISH

Like instant, wingéd thoughts they leap,  
To swift and iridescent flight—  
A second's gleaming way they keep—  
Then plunge into the sea's blue night

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

### REEF DREAMS

I dreamed that all the still, sad tears,  
My soul had wept away from thee,  
Had turned to silver phosphorus  
And floated on a Tropic Sea.

I dreamed that all the words we spoke,  
Through charméd nights so long ago,  
Had found their voices in the sea,  
And murmured on the coral reefs low.

I dreamed my soul was but a bloom  
Of Cereus, so silver white,  
And thine the strangely vibrant moon  
That found its golden heart one night.

*HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

HAWAIIAN SINGING

O, Life, that beats in every tone !  
    No other cadences like those  
Ever in my soul's palace rose—  
    So gayly sweet and sadly lone.

One with the sun-green isles it seems  
    Beneath—the struggling, surging fires ;  
Above—the palm trees' windy lyres,  
    Whose sweetness follows in our dreams.

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

### **AMONGST THE KOA TREES**

How sweet to dream amongst the Koa trees!  
There on the mountain's shoulder with the  
haze  
Of Kilauea on the slow, blue breeze,  
Raising itself to meet the sun's keen rays.

Yes, there to lie at length,  
Tingling with life and strength,  
Stretched in the crooked lines of shade and  
light,  
And ponder on the Koa forest bright.

How still it is! The sky of cobalt blue,  
The cool and golden sparkle of the air—  
Is it through days like this the gnarled trees  
grew,  
And yet could find themselves no shape more  
fair?  
Or do those crooked limbs await  
Old Kilauea's hiss of fate?  
Enwrapping them, even as those trees of old,  
Whose death we read in sunken lava mould.

And yet a thousand years may come and go,  
Ere that wild creature issues forth again;  
And here upon this old tree fallen low,  
I lie and ponder things beyond Man's ken.  
But oh, 'tis sweet to dream at ease,  
Alone amongst the Koa trees!  
While far around the blue-gold charm cloth lie,  
And clasps within its magic all Hawaii.

KILAUEA

A Silence desolate lies over all  
Those mist-hung leagues of hardened lava  
waves;  
Whence a red beacon lures to those mad caves  
Where liquid light lashes its prison wall.  
Held in the grip of Nature's rocky thrall,  
Struggling for the far Freedom that it craves  
Ever the mumbling mountain's side it braves,  
While winds blow back the smoke's titanic  
pall.  
Oh, mighty force of God! Oh, spawn of Life!  
Which deep within the Earth's hot heart doth  
breed,  
Searing our brains with thy convulsive strife,  
Here on these sea-far isles we pause and  
read!  
While the pale pilot stars in their dim height,  
Cours quietly on o'er the red eye of Night.

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

### L'ENVOI

I will not say good-bye to thee,  
For he who once has been thy guest,  
Though wandering far beyond the sea,  
Will seek again thy star-lit rest.

Aloha !

I shall not even say good-night ;  
Thou knowest sometimes nights are long.  
Full measure I received of light ;  
I give—these memories of song.

Aloha !

## *HAWAIIAN MEMORIES*

### OUT OF THE GOLDEN GATE

Out of the Golden Gate, ahoy! Out of the  
Golden Gate!

Where the wild wind swings,  
And the spendthrift sings,  
And the strange, far countries wait.

I'll breathe no sigh for the Past, ahoy!  
I'll breathe no sigh for the Past.  
For the furrow deep  
Shall charm my sleep,  
And I am free at last.

Now let the pilot go, ahoy! Now let the pilot go.  
For we must head  
To the sunset red,  
Where the sea-tanged tempests blow.

So pull her to the West, ahoy! Oh, pull her to  
the West!  
'Till the cliff-house fails,  
And the coast-wise sails  
Are hid by the sea's white crest.

Then buck the bounding waves, ahoy! Oh, buck  
the bounding waves!  
Let the phosphorus ball  
Through the black sea crawl,  
Over the sailors' graves.

Let the old wind tear and rip, ahoy! Let the old  
wind tear and rip!  
Till the bending spars,  
And the mist-blind stars  
Into the ocean dip.



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